

JESUS CHRIST
AND THE OLD
COMMANDMENTS

BY
JOHN P. PETERS

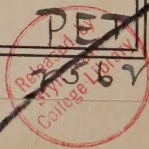
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Jesus Christ and the old
commandments : a study in the

Jesus Christ
AND
The Old Commandments

A Study in the Development of Religion

BY

REV. JOHN P. PETERS, D.D.

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Dedicated
to
My People
of
St. Michael's

Whose loving kindness has borne with me
these twenty years

FOREWORD.

These seven sermons were preached in St. Michael's Church in Lent and on Easter Day, 1913. They are a study in the development of religion, the combination of my researches in oriental antiquity with my experiences, as pastor of a great city parish, in dealing with present day thinking and practice.

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I.

GOD.

Exodus xx. 3: Thou shalt have none other gods beside me.

Exodus xx. 4: Thou shalt not make thee a graven image.

.

THE Ten Words lie at the base of all Hebrew legislation. The Hebrew came to regard them as the fundamental document of the divine revelation. They were given by God himself to Moses, and written by the finger of God upon the stones. They were the sacred contents of the Ark, which in the older temple was deposited in the innermost sanctuary, the Holy of Holies, as a special divine treasure. It is interesting to observe the increase of the sanctity of this Ark. First it was carried before the Israelites. It went out into battle with them as an indication of the Divine Presence and the Divine Power. When they were defeated, it fell into the hands of the Philistines. Recovered by David, it ultimately came to be regarded as so sacred that it must be guarded from the sight and touch of men, from the possibility not only of capture, but even of profanation by the touch of over-eager worshipers.

So it was hidden away, no longer to be opened or looked at, but to be venerated on faith from a distance, until at last, with the destruction of the Temple, it vanishes.

But the contents of the stone tables were preserved. They were commented upon and explained; and with the comments and explanations attached they have come down to us in two forms, varying somewhat in the explanations, in the twentieth chapter of Exodus and the fifth chapter of Deuteronomy. Out of those two reports we are able to restore the original Ten Words. Very simple, very primitive they are in form and content, but containing truth so fundamental, so profound that the world's experience has justified the ancient Hebrew in claiming for them a special inspiration as the word of God. When you compare them with the highest utterances of the most civilized peoples of the ancient world, and of the best thinkers among those peoples, you are impressed with the completeness of these words in their terseness and simplicity, the lack of any false note detracting from their high thought. There are, in certain Egyptian utterances and, to a less extent, in Babylonian utterances, as also in the utterances of thinkers in India, Greece and China,

thoughts which are very high and lofty; but combined with that which appeals to you as fundamental, eternal truth, there is always something which is false or trivial. It is all the more amazing that you should have such an utterance as this in the earliest Hebrew period; and these words in their primitive form cannot be placed at any later period.

They do not, however, in their literal sense, express precisely that which you and I now attribute to them. The possibility of world application lies there, but the words themselves, in their first application and meaning, refer to conditions of primitive life.

First of all you have two tables, after the manner of primitive people, who are near the sources of life, who are measuring the world from their own bodies, who are using those bodies as the standards for weights and measures and figures, and each table has five Commandments, two hands with five fingers on each hand! They go far back in the world's thought, to the conditions which gave you the systems of counting that we now use, both the decimal and the duo-decimal systems; and they go far back also in their idea of the relationship of man to God and to his fellow men.

In our Church Catechism we are told that in

these Commandments we learn two things: "My duty towards God and my duty towards my neighbour;" and when we come to study those long, old-fashioned and somewhat monotonous expositions of the meaning of the Commandments, contained in our Catechism, we find that our duty toward our parents is considered to be part of our duty toward our neighbor, so that the Commandments have been divided into two parts of four and six respectively. That is the thought of a more advanced age, of one which has moved far away from the primitive, fundamental conceptions represented in these Commandments.

In the old thought the parent was placed with God. He belonged in the first table, not in the second. He was in relation to the child almost divine. He had absolute power over him; the power of life and death, the power to sell into slavery. And after death the child still owed honor to the parent; that sort of honor which, in some ancient peoples, led to an absolute deification of the ancestors. In Hebrew we do not have such a deification, nevertheless the father and the mother were placed in the table with God.

And now let us turn to these first two Commandments: the Commandment of the one God,

and the prohibition of the worship of images. When you study the words of these Commandments, you find that, after all, that first Commandment does not go so far as you at first thought. It is not monotheism, as you and I understand monotheism. It is not the declaration that there is but one God. It is a practical commandment to the Hebrew with regard to his own God: "There shall not be to thee other gods" or "second gods," if you wish so to render it, "before me." I am the great god, your special god. And as you read early Hebrew history you see the Hebrews, many of the best and highest of them, recognizing the existence of other gods without a consciousness of disloyalty to their own great God. David, when he is fleeing from the face of Saul, complains that Saul would compel him to worship other gods, by driving him into the land of the Philistines. The Lord, Jehovah, or, more correctly, Yahaweh, was the great God of Israel in the land of Israel. He was not the god of the Philistines, nor could He be worshipped in their land. Only on His own land could he be worshipped. So, when Elisha heals Naaman of his leprosy in the name of the Lord, the God of Israel, and Naaman desires to worship that great God in Damascus, he asks from Elisha the gift of a portion of the land of

Israel, that he may take it with him to Damascus, in order that standing on that he may worship the God of Israel.

And the Second Commandment is, in its literal sense, equally primitive, equally simple, equally, as it seems to us to-day, limited. The Israelite and his forefathers had expressed the presence of God by setting up huge rude stones. Those were alike their first symbol of God and their first altar. On them they poured the blood of the sacrifice; nor could they think of a sacrifice and of God's acceptance of that sacrifice without such stones. Even the great Prophet Isaiah, when he would tell of the worship of God spreading into other lands, says that in Egypt should be set up the *mazzebas* or pillars, these rude stones indicating the presence of their God.* What was forbidden in this Commandment, primarily, was not the worship of God present in a rude, unshapen stone, but the making of an image in the form of a man or a beast, such images as were set up and worshipped in Egypt and Babylon, the work of men's hands, not of God's hands.

Does it seem to you as though with such an

* Isaiah xlx.

interpretation these Commandments were unworthy, as though, when we search into their original meaning, we deprive them of their inspiration and divinity? You have only to study intelligently the part which they played in the development of the religious life of Israel to realize the genuineness of their inspiration. They are like the teaching which you give to a child. You are unable to explain to him all things. You do not give the child the instruction which, literally interpreted, would apply to all the affairs of his after life; but, if you are wise, you give the child in the command or instruction, conveyed in whatsoever way it may be, which is to guide him in his childhood problems, something which is spiritually, eternally true, which will grip the soul of the child, develop his thoughts, and itself grow with that development, until the child, grasping the spirit and applying it more broadly, makes it the very foundation of his noblest thoughts and achievements.

This loyalty to their own God, which the Hebrews were taught in these two Commandments, weaned them, bit by bit, from the polytheism so flagrant about them. The loyalty to their God taught in the first Commandment, that they should put none others before their God,

proved to involve in practice making that God their sole God; and it proved also to involve the exaltation of their conception of God into a lofty spiritual sphere. Polytheistic worship involved the deification of attributes and characteristics, the deification of animal strength and brute force, lusts and appetites. On the other hand the rejection by the Jews of the gods of wind and rain, of sun and moon and stars, of animal and human gods with their qualities of cunning, strength and lust meant the exaltation of the spiritual powers; until finally their God came to be conceived as the God of law, the God of justice and truth and mercy. At first, it is true, He was so in a narrow way, for His own people only; but ultimately His power reached out beyond the bounds of Israel. For when they had abolished the other gods within Israel, then they began to abolish the other gods without, to understand that it was God, the Lord, who made all the world; to comprehend that there were no other gods of other nations. And dimly their greatest prophets, like Amos and the second Isaiah, began to see, also, that, consequently, the Lord was God not of Israel alone, but of all the nations on the earth, a God of justice and love for them also;

and that therefore they and Israel were bound in a covenant toward one another of neighborliness and kindness; that the laws of God applied not to the Jew alone, but also to the others beyond.

So the First Commandment was gradually leading the Jew on to monotheism. First, he was to be loyal to his own God. Then, when at last he has learned that lesson, he finds that his God is the only God of all the world, and faithfulness to Him becomes monotheism. He takes the place of all the gods of the heathen. He it is that made all nations of men on the face of the whole earth. He created all things, yea, even the evil with the good. There is none beside Him. He sits supreme in heaven, ineffable, transcendent, ruling over all.

Similarly, the prohibition to make images, contained in the Second Commandment, at first prevented the Jew from worshipping the heathen gods of the more civilized nations about him, cunningly graven to represent men and women, beasts and monsters; and, by preventing him from making and worshipping such images, it helped to keep him from the worship of strange gods, and prevented him from degrading and animalizing his own conception of God. True, he did for many centuries worship God's

presence in a rude stone, but in his conception God was not the stone, in the sense in which to the heathen God was the image of a man or an animal. The very rudeness of the rough, natural stone held him back from such a conception. There was a long battle against the tendency to do that which those about them did, nations more civilized and more cultured than they; a battle against graven images, based upon this Commandment, which gradually brought the Jew to a more spiritual conception of God, as one who cannot be represented by any outward form, or be present in any symbol, whether a rude stone of God's workmanship or a cunningly graven image of man's hands; to the conception of a God unseen, spiritual, dwelling in the heavens. And so, ultimately, under the influence of the thought developed by the Commandment against graven images, all symbols were abolished, the rude stones dashed down and broken in pieces, and the Jew forbidden the use of any image, any representation of any sort of God or of His presence.

This Commandment had, like the first, assumed a new meaning, which yet seemed to be inherent, if not in its words, at least in its thought. The First Commandment and the Second had both become in their development,

of which they had been the foundation and the cause, richer, fuller, greater. Under their influence the Jewish thought of God finally reached that transcendental monotheism which conceived of Him as unseen, unbounded, almighty, dwelling in the heavens, incapable of representation. This was monotheism; but Jewish monotheism was not yet perfect.

In spite of the broader dreams of some prophetic writers, the ultimate Jewish theology shut the door of hope to all but Jews. They had destroyed the gods of the heathen, but they had not given to the heathen their God. Along with their monotheistic development they had retained the idea of their own special relation to God. He stood to them in a relation in which He stood to no others. All the rest of the world was made for their behoof. They were His children. And yet even they were not children in the dearest and best sense of that term. In developing the thought of the greatness and power of God, His majesty and oneness, they had taken Him out of the earth. They had abolished much of that simple, primitive thought of Him as walking among His children, conversing with them. They had made Him a transcendent God.

Now comes Christianity, building still on this

old foundation, using the old words, but with still an added sense. God is the God of the Gentile as much as of the Jew. God knows no distinction of person or race. God is a father, but one who is not transcendent and far removed. He walks among men, to be touched, to be seen of them. All the world is an expression of His love and of His truth; but in man himself He is made manifest, just so far as in man love and truth are expressed.

The first chapter of St. John's Gospel sets forth this idea. You have reached the summit of the ethical development. God is love and truth. Jesus is a perfect expression of love and truth, therefore He is divine. But that carries with it a new thought about man, exalting man; or perhaps we should say, exalting the possibilities that are in man. When, in the Nicene Creed, we say of Jesus that He was "begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father", we are expressing the doctrine of our own divinity; that we are unlike the things about us. God is immanent; God expresses himself wonderfully in this beautiful, well-ordered universe, which we have only begun to comprehend; but God expresses himself more fully and in a different way in man. We are of His essence. We are not made, we are born out of

Him, His children. We have the divine substance in us. And we to-day use the old Commandment with all this new thought. It has lost nothing. It has gained much, and still it is the same.

And now I have spoken to you theologically with regard to the meaning and development of these two Commandments from their rude beginning up to their Christian meaning: how they were the foundation on which monotheism was built, the cornerstone of a wonderful building. Let me add a few words of practical exhortation with regard to their present day value and meaning.

There are other of the Ten Commandments which, we realize, contain fundamental truths that have not yet found their full expression, and which are openly disobeyed. We need to preach about them, about the Sixth Commandment, about the Seventh Commandment and about the Eighth Commandment; but we are apt to have a comfortable sense that, so far as the First Commandment and the Second Commandment are concerned, we have reached achievement. Very far from it! Of course we know that, so far as image worship is concerned, the Second Commandment is not obeyed by the heathen and by idolaters. Is it obeyed by us,

who call ourselves Christians? I think we of Protestant descent would say: No, it is not obeyed by the Roman Catholics, it is not obeyed in the Greek Church, and perhaps not in the oriental churches in general. They make images and worship them. They bow down to relics. They wear charms, which have been blessed by priest or Pope or bishop or saint, and suppose them to possess some magical virtue. Just so far as people really do this they are, it is true, disobeying this Commandment and that other, which is so closely connected with it, the First: "Thou shalt have none other gods but me." They are really polytheists and idolaters.

But that is true, also, of a good many among us. What a strange lurking of foolish superstition there is among us in the foolish reliance upon lucky days, lucky objects, lucky pennies, rabbits' feet and goodness knows what besides. Mostly you would say that these things are harmless. Yes, in the same sense saints' relics and charms and the like are harmless; but they are, after all, an expression of a low conception of God, of God's relation to us and our relation to Him. We are thinking that in some way, by some external charm and device, we can avert evil or bring good; the old, old superstition of the most primitive heathen. Sometimes you

find people believing in these things in a sort of shamefaced way, holding the superstitions, but not wishing to have them known. Such always remind the Bible reader of Ezekiel's picture of the secret worshippers of abominations in the Temple of the Lord at Jerusalem, professing to worship the Lord in His Temple, but some of them turning to the east to worship the sun, others in hidden rooms and holes and corners in little bands worshipping various abominations, and these things so affecting their lives and the life of the nation as to bring on them the final great calamity, the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, and the exile of Judah. The difficulty is that men and women having such conceptions, bowing down to such graven images, are, to just that extent, shut out from the true God.

In essence I have said that these conceptions are polytheistic. They do not recognize the God who is all in all. They prevent us from seeing, in the things which we call evil, the hand of God, of learning to abolish what is really evil, and out of much that we call evil to bring good. One form of this polytheism is a curious dualism, a belief in two elements or powers, which has had a singular influence in the Christian world, and has undergone a strange revival in

recent days. It was the dualistic belief in a devil and a power for ill, outside of and antagonistic to God, which was behind witchcraft and the horrible persecutions connected with it. That power of evil is connected especially with things material. The body, with its lusts and appetites, comes to be regarded as a bad thing; and so you have in the Church that strange conception which makes marriage a lower life, which seems to regard eating and drinking as containing in themselves something unworthy and low. Now this dualism is expressing itself in the form of Christian Science, in the doctrine of the evil or the non-existence of material things; a bar to the knowledge of the truth, and to progress in the love of God.

But we lie perhaps in most danger in another direction, in a direction which is not concerned with graven images, or images or representations of any sort, but with an inward conception: the placing of something else before God as our ruler, the object of our love and our desire, our inspiration and our hope. We profess to believe in the God of love and truth, manifested, in human life, in Jesus, our Lord. His life we profess to take for our own, as the expression of God to us. But really, instead of the life of Jesus we take the life of Mammon, or of Venus,

or of the decent orderliness and quasi respectability of Jupiter and Juno, if one can credit them with being the god and goddess of such things. We have exalted humanity to divinity, not in the form of Jesus, but in the form of the opinion of those about us. We wish to do good to be seen of men, and we count that as good which is seen of them. That is the polytheism with which we have to contend in our lives and in our natures today. We have not reached that conception of monotheism which was set forth by Jesus until, in very truth, we have made the measure of our life the judgment of God; until we seek to walk with Him perfectly, in His love and in His truth; until He has become to us all in all. Can you and I claim that monotheism? Until we can, I think we need the recitation and the study of these primal Commandments of monotheism and spiritual worship.

II

THE LIE.

Exodus xx. 7: Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

Exodus xx. 16: Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

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HE who has grasped the Christian sense of the First Commandment, "Thou shall have none other gods before me", needs no other Commandment but that one. If he truly knows God, then he truly knows love and truth. He knows the divinity that is in himself and in his fellow men. He understands the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men. He who has accepted Christ's interpretation of the First Commandment finds the other Commandments to be rather Commandments of detail, the embodiment of that great principle in certain details of life, which details are themselves, however, of very large importance, covering each one of them a large sphere of man's nature and experience.

In trying to speak to you about Jesus Christ and the old Commandments, my special theme to-day is "The Lie;" and my text consists of the

Third and Ninth Commandments, those two Commandments which, in the two tables of the Law, forbid lying, literally in the name of God and about one's neighbor.

In old world religions, the religion of the Persians, the Zoroastrian faith, is often cited as that religion which especially lays emphasis upon truth. Over and over again, in the sacred literature of the Persians, you encounter denunciation and abhorrence of "the lie." I think there is an even greater emphasis upon truth in the Old Testament, but, owing to the method of expression and the translation of the words used, it is not so clear to the ordinary reader of the Bible.

In the Sunday School instruction to which I was subjected in my infancy and in the common explanation given to-day to the Third Commandment, its essential character as a Commandment of truth is not brought out. Ask the ordinary person, who has received the ordinary Bible instruction of our Sunday schools, schools and churches, what is the meaning of the Third Commandment, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain," and I venture to think that the great majority will answer you: 'It forbids swearing;' and, if you question further, you will find that to their

mind "swearing" is cursing. The Third Commandment is, in their conception, a prohibition of evil words, and especially of the use of the name of God or Christ in combination with coarse words. Indirectly and remotely, it does forbid such use. Possibly, therefore, you might say that to this extent such an interpretation is right, that it is indirectly contained in the Third Commandment; but it certainly is not the essence, nor the first and important meaning of that Commandment. The wording of that Commandment is very simple, and would seem to be very plain. It prohibits a person from swearing falsely by the name of the Lord, the God of Israel. In the literal sense it does not forbid him to swear falsely by the name of any other god, nor to tell as many lies as he wants to, provided that he does not swear to their truth by the name of the Lord, his God.

Now remember that, in the old world, and especially in the old oriental world—and this is true to-day in many parts of the oriental world—the name is a reality. He who knows the real name of a god or of a demon possesses control, by that knowledge, over that god or demon. He who knows your real name possesses such control over you. So the real, secret, sacred name is not commonly used, and is permit-

ted to be known only to a few intimates or initiates. You know how, in the later days of Judaism, it was forbidden to pronounce the personal name of the Lord, the God of Israel, and where the consonants of that name appeared in the Holy Scriptures, they were marked with other vowels, that the reader might not pronounce it, but the word for Lord instead. That is why, when in the Old Testament you meet that holy name, you find it not transliterated into English, but instead "The Lord," printed in capitals,—at least in the King James' version.

First and foremost the Third Commandment meant that this secret, sacred name of the Lord, the God of Israel, might not be used by the Israelite for any false statement. But think what that involved! It held before the Israelite's mind an exalted conception of the Lord his God as a god of truth, as a god who would surely punish falsehood, whom therefore the Israelite dare not invoke unless he spoke with absolute truthfulness. Now, such a command as that in itself tended to give him a high conception of his God as an ethical God, a God who abhorred and hated the lie, a God whose very essence was truth.

It is curious, sometimes amusing, to observe the superstition and self-deception by which

people will delude themselves with regard to a lie. Some of my Arab workmen stole antiquities from the diggings. Now in archeological research that is a very serious offense, just as horse stealing used to be on the frontier; for each condition and each civilization has its special code, sins and virtues being magnified or minimized according to surrounding conditions. The suspected men were put under solemn oath. They were all Moslems. They swore glibly by Allah, by Mohammed, by Ali and on the Koran that they had not stolen the tablets. Then someone said to me: "Take them to the shrine of the local saint. In case of need they will not hesitate to swear falsely by God, Mohammed and the Koran, but they are far away and the local shrine and saint are near. By him they will not swear falsely." And thus we found the culprit. Those who had clear consciences went and swore; the guilty one dared not take the oath, and his attempts to evade it brought the guilt home to him. I am told that similar conditions prevail in parts of Spain or Italy, where the people are practically polytheists and their real God is the local saint. They, too, those who have personal experience tell me, will similarly swear falsely by God and by Christ and by the Virgin, but not by their local saint at the local shrine.

There existed the same condition in old Israel. Under those conditions this Commandment was a Commandment tending to monotheism, as well as to an ethical conception of God as a God of truth, and consequently to the adoption of a high ethical standard of honesty for their own lives. There was one God, the Lord, their great God, who was the God of truth, who abhorred a lie, and by His name no man might swear falsely. If he did, the vengeance of God would descend upon him. As far as it was possible to accomplish it by human law, this Commandment and its interpretation made the Israelite regard not his local god as the great god, and as the god by whom he dare not swear falsely, but the Lord, the God of Israel. So it tended to establish monotheism, and so it tended to make that monotheism ethical.

So much for the original meaning of the Commandment; but it followed as a sequence that, if the Lord, the God of Israel, was a god of such truth, then they who claimed to be His followers and bore His name must also be men of truth. I have spoken of the significance of the name in the ancient oriental world. Now precisely because it did have such a significance, men sought to connect themselves with the name of their God. The father would en-

trust his child to his god; if that God were Nebo, perhaps by some such name as "Nebo, preserve the crown", a royal name. If he worshipped God especially under the name of Father, he would use some name like "Father is high," that is Abram, a way of recognizing the exaltation of the divinity as a means of appeasing the divinity: or he might bespeak the love, the graciousness of the divinity in some such title as El-hanan, "God hath been gracious", or Jo-hanan or John, "the Lord hath been gracious." By studying ancient family names among the Jews and kindred peoples we can trace both their faith and, to some extent, their conception of their god or gods.

But, if the Lord were a God of truth, then how could one bear His name upon him and be other than truthful? This Commandment was a leavening force, tending always toward a higher and ever higher conception of truth, until at last you reach that conception which is expressed in our Lord's interpretation of this Commandment contained in the fifth chapter of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, vss. 33-37: "Again, ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: but I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by

the heaven, for it is the throne of God; nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of his feet; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, for thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your speech be, Yea, yea: Nay, nay: and whatsoever is more than these is of the evil one."

This is part of an exposition of the Christian method of interpreting the ancient Commandments, prefaced by this general explanation: "Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall excel the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Jesus came not to destroy the Law or the Prophets, but to fulfil them. Now the Pharisees, in their attempt to give importance to the

ancient Law and the prophetic word, had built up an elaborate system of exposition. Not one jot, that is, an iota, the tiniest letter of the alphabet, or a tittle, one of the marks which showed how a letter was to be vocalized, —not one of these small and sometimes difficult to be distinguished marks must be lost or altered in the Law and the Prophets; and the breach of one of the smallest things commanded, such a thing as the color or form of a tassel worn for ceremonial purposes, was to be counted as a breach of the whole Law, because the whole was one in spirit. What they were aiming at Jesus accepted; but it was the breach in spirit of any command, however small, which was to be condemned and which constituted a breach of the whole Law. What was the spirit of the Law? Keep the letter as much as you would, if you perverted or changed the spirit of it in the least, you had destroyed the whole.

And so, in the case of this commandment of truth, the essence of it was the conception of the truth of God and the truthfulness of His children. It was not then a question whether one swore by the name of God to that which he said, but whether he spoke the truth.

You know how little children beat the truth around the bush? One tells another something

and swears to the truth of it by this or that. He is called upon to double-cross himself, to do or say some special thing, which in the childish code is supposed to insure absolute truthfulness, to prevent all evasion. If, having done that, he tells a falsehood, why then he is really and truly a liar, very bad and very contemptible; but if he can show that in some way he had avoided that, that he had crossed a finger or whatever it may be, why then it is not so terrible. The same trickery prevails among grown-up men. It was the same principle which would allow my Mohammedan Arabs to swear falsely by Allah, Mohammed, Ali and on the Koran, but not by the local saint; which would permit a Spanish peasant to swear falsely by God and his Christ and by the Virgin, but not by his local saint. It was the same principle which would make a difference of conscience between the statement made in court with the solemnity of an oath before God and on the Bible to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, and the statement made in ordinary conversation with no oath or asseveration.

Jesus affirms the eternal validity and the essential meaning of this Commandment in the interpretation which I have quoted. It was

said by them of old time: "Thou shalt not forswear thyself," i. e. whatever you have promised unto the Lord or before the Lord, that you must perform and keep. Then He goes on to say that there must be no evasion. It matters not whether the oath sworn was by heaven or by the earth or by Jerusalem. All oaths alike are oaths by God, for God is all and in all. Heaven is His throne, the earth His footstool, Jerusalem His city. Everywhere He is present and he who swears by anything invokes God. He, the spirit and principle of truth, is ever present. In His presence we speak. We need no oath to bind us. If we have entered into the true relation with God, we know Him as a Father, in whose presence we walk day by day; who holds us by the hand or supports us in His arms, waking or sleeping. Because He is truth, we also must be truthful, and the simplest word which we utter binds us to truthfulness as much as though we had affirmed it by the greatest and most solemn of oaths and asseverations, as: "By God it is true;" "I swear it by the name of Christ." Formal oaths, with hand uplifted and a kiss upon the Holy Book, are not necessary for us Christians. For court purposes, to impress those who have not reached a true knowledge of God, they may be well, and it is

entirely proper for us to submit to court rules and regulations. There is no need of taking the attitude of the Quaker; but in principle, the man who needs anything more to confirm his words than his own simple statement is not truthful. He has not, in Jesus' sense, learned to understand or to obey this Commandment.

Truthfulness is a rare thing. We are most of us not truthful with ourselves and with life. How can we be truthful with God? We are not willing to know ourselves. How can we know God? I do not want to know my weaknesses of body or of soul. I want to appear to myself and to others something that I am not. I am pleased by the person that tells me the nice things. I have a personal resentment against the person that makes me face unpleasant facts. When I am sick, very sick with pneumonia, or typhoid or consumption or cancer, the doctor does not dare to tell me of it. He does not dare to tell me what the disease is or that it is liable to be fatal, because I do not want to know that. I do not want to face the facts of life and of death. At the threshold of the old Greek oracle at Delphi the seeker after God was bidden to know himself. It was a wise word. That knowledge Jesus brings to us, the knowledge of the real truth about our-

selves. Without the willingness to face myself and life I cannot know the truth of God.

God is love and God is truth, and I take it the two cannot be divided. True love means to love truly, and to love, when you give it the final emphasis, means truly to love, to love with knowledge of the truth. To truly love my neighbor, I must love him in truth.

And so we have, in the second table, the Commandment: "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." We are again taken into court. As in the First Commandment we had the setting of the sacred court of God, the calling of His name in vow or asseveration, so here we have the testimony given before the judge with regard to our neighbor. But he who has learned to know God stands ever before the judgment seat of God, testifying in His sight; and the Judge before whom he stands is both Judge and loving Father, in whose house we live, with whom we sit down to meat, with whom we play, for whom and with whom we labor, and who labors for and with us. Before this Judge I speak, whensoever I speak about my neighbor, and if I say aught that is false, I have spoken it before the great Judge of all.

But surely I must truly know my neighbor, and if I truly know him I must, forsooth, see his

faults and failings. I cannot be blind to them. Then, forsooth, I must tell him those faults and failures. And some men pride themselves on their truthfulness, because they wantonly speak to those about them what they call rude truths, discarding conventions, refusing to flatter. Such men are commonly the worst liars. They do not see the virtues of others, and they fail to see their own faults.

The love of truth enables us to see the beam in our own eye; the truth of love enables us to see the virtues of our neighbor. It is astonishing what power some people have to see the mote in their neighbor's eye, and how they pride themselves upon that power. They really seem to think that it is the power of seeing the truth. The truth! That is a name which has been chosen from time to time by newspapers, which, as a rule, love to tell the misdeeds of their neighbors, the scandal and the tattle. Ah! but that is not the truth. The greater part of it is false, and even where the facts are so, it is false in the representation which it gives of the character of those about you. It tells only one thing, the evil, and that, I take it, is by far the smaller part.

Then there is a type of men, in the Press and out of the Press, who are always hastening to

tell you about the thieves and the liars. The men who do not agree with them are necessarily dishonest; they are grafters, liars and the like. Now people who see life in this way see it so because of their own evil. The man who really believes that all men and all women are impure, that all persons engaged in business are thieves and bribers, and all persons in political life corrupt and venal, is himself impure and dishonest. He is reflecting himself in his judgment of the world.

The man who invents stories for your private ear or for the Press about the evil doings of people, who sells you such news or seeks to curry favor with you by such stories, is wrong in heart. Not only is he himself impure or dishonest, but he is ready to make profit out of the miserable depravity of human nature which he sees about him. As you would have men believe in your virtue, so believe in the virtue of those about you. As you would have men believe in your honesty, so believe in the honesty of those about you; and in so doing you will come nearer the truth than by the other method. Tell all you know of good; hear all you can of good about your neighbor; so you will help to cultivate virtue.

I have told you often the story of the great

English authoress who, when anyone told her an unkind or unpleasant thing about her neighbor, instantly put on her bonnet and insisted on taking the tale-bearer with her to the friend of whom the tale had been told, that they might find out the truth at once. Tale-bearers soon ceased to bother her with their mean and malicious stories and suggestions.

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor!" Tell no tale of evil, make no suggestion of disparagement without a real necessity for doing so. Then be sure of your facts and be public, not private, in what you say, not speaking behind the person's back, but openly. Listen to no tale of ill, unless there be a real necessity, and then demand facts. You and I stand ever in the court of judgment of Almighty God. The rules of that court require that all testimony about our neighbor shall be the truth in love.

III.

LABOR AND REST

Deut. v. 12-15: Observe the sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the Lord thy God commanded thee.

Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is a sabbath unto the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord thy God brought thee out thence by a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.

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WHAT I have read you as my text is the Fourth Commandment, with its commentary, as contained in the Book of Deuteronomy. I say: with its commentary. If you will compare the Commandment as given in the fifth chapter of Deuteronomy with this Commandment as given in the twentieth chapter of Exodus, you will notice that the actual word of command is the same in both, to remember or observe the Sabbath Day, to keep it holy. Then comes, in both cases, a definition directing that all work shall be done on the six other days of the week and including, under that direction,

the whole household down to the outsider, the non-Jew, who may be in the house, together with the slaves, both male and female, and the cattle. Then follows a reason or foundation for the Commandment, which is different in the two accounts.

The Sabbath Day is an ancient institution, whose origin is lost in obscurity. We see something resembling it certainly in provisions of Babylonian ritual, and we dimly gather that there was, among the ancestors of Hebrew and Babylonian, a day, one day in the week, or rather a certain number of days in the month, set apart as possessing a peculiar character. The Sabbath was not originally a day of worship. Its original object was not to secure a rest from toil. It was a mark of a special and peculiar relationship to a deity, who exacted of his clients this sacrifice, as it were, of a day.

Now, at first sight, it may seem to you that a Commandment of that description has no proper place in a code of this high ethical character; yet, as you trace the history of this Commandment, you find it playing a part of the utmost importance; and indeed it seems as tho Israel could not have reached its ultimate position of high ethical monotheism without this

Commandment. Let us see how that was the case.

First the day becomes a mark of attachment to their God. As we look through the older Hebrew history and the words of the Prophets we find evidence of the existence from the outset of this Commandment, but, while the Sabbath is referred to, and the keeping of the Sabbath holy, that is, separate from other days, apart from the ordinary relationships, forms part of the religious rule and practice of Israel, it does not, nevertheless, take at the outset a very prominent part.

The form of the Commandment in the Book of Deuteronomy shows us that, during the early prophetic period and under the softening, humanizing influences which are represented in general in the movement which culminated in the Book of Deuteronomy, a new ethical, social element had been introduced into the Commandment. It had been made more than a mere outward mark of connection with the Deity by setting apart one day as holy. (Remember, by the way, that holy, in the old use, does not mean at all what you and I mean by holy to-day. It means simply "set apart" from ordinary uses, whether for good or for bad). It had become, by the time when Deuteronomy

was composed, a Commandment of kindness and humanity toward the poor and the dependent. The slaves, and even the animals were to be given rest from toil on that day, and the Jew in his prosperity and his wealth must not forget that he was a slave in the land of Egypt. It was through the loving kindness of the Lord, his God, that he was brought out of Egypt with a mighty hand, to give him freedom. Let him be mindful, now that he possesses the power, to show loving kindness toward his slaves and those who toil for him, both man and beast.

When the Jews were driven into exile much of their old religion assumed a new meaning for them. Especially it became apparent to the leaders and the thinkers that, if they were not to perish absolutely as a people and a religion, if they were not to lose themselves in the heathenism of Babylonia and the other countries in which they were scattered, it was necessary to maintain some form of outward distinction. The circumcision, which had separated them from the Philistines and some of the other nations round about assumed, as a mark of separation, of holiness unto God, a new significance, and still more was this true of the Sabbath Day. It be-

came a virtue to maintain the observance of the Sabbath in the peculiar form which had been developed among them as one day of total rest in each week, the seventh day of the week. This was done always at a sacrifice and loss to themselves, and was emphasized as a religious obligation, belonging to the very essence of their religion. It was fundamental in its nature and hence belonged to the nature of God himself. And so the sabbath observance came to be conceived of as a part of God's original plan in creation, as rudimentary and essential as anything could be. God toiled six days to make all things and on the seventh day God rested. It was a part of his plan of the universe, and therefore His children must rest on that day.

It took some time to make this strict observance of the Sabbath effective. If you turn to the book of Nehemiah and read of the struggles of that godly Jew to restore Jerusalem, to build up the ancient nation, you will find that the Sabbath Day was not then observed in Palestine. Men were sowing and men were reaping in the fields upon the Sabbath, so Nehemiah tells us. They were treading grapes in the wine presses. They were bringing into Jerusalem

all manner of burdens. They worked their beasts on that day and they permitted the sojourners in their gates, the men of Tyre, to bring fish from the coasts and to vend them on the Sabbath Day, with all manner of ware. With all his energy Nehemiah sets about curing this. He and the religious and national leaders of his time were conscious of the vital necessity of the observance of that day as a means of preserving the religion and the race of the Jews.

That belief of the leaders, which had already expressed itself in the Commandment as we have it in the twentieth chapter of Exodus, and which now expressed itself in such active administrative measures as Nehemiah made use of, has its justification in history. One of the main reasons why the Jew has continued a people and a religion, a force in the world down to this day, is because he has marked himself with a mark. He has laid upon himself an obligation, the fulfilment of which involves sacrifice to him, and, by binding him with his fellows in that sacrifice, gives him and them alike an idea and an ideal. In thus binding the Jews together and maintaining their religion, the Sabbath became a vital force in the preservation of monotheism.

As I have already pointed out, the Sabbath

had, at a relatively early stage, connected itself with an ethical-social sentiment, so that you may fitly characterize this Commandment as one of the great forces in the development and maintenance of the spiritual-ethical monotheism of the Jewish religion. But just because the Jew appreciated the immense importance of this outward mark for the maintenance and development of his religion, therefore he hedged it about with all sorts of safeguards and definitions, until the essential meaning was in danger of being lost in the details and red tape of the Law.

That was the condition in the time of Jesus. He was criticized by the Pharisees for healing on the Sabbath Day. He was criticized for permitting His disciples, as they passed through a field of ripening grain, to help themselves, according to the custom usual on other days, to the ears that bordered the footpath. Under the ruling of the Pharisee a man might give a dinner party on the Sabbath Day, because, by the technicalities of their decision, that did not involve work; but such relief to suffering as Jesus gave had not come within their purview. No provision had been made for it. It was prohibited. Had the grains of wheat been plucked on the sixth day and brought in a dish

by a slave and set before them on the Sabbath, they might have eaten as abundantly as they pleased, but, never mind how hungry or faint they were, to put forth their hands and actually pluck the grain from the stalk on the Sabbath was forbidden. Now you can see that there was a purpose behind those provisions of detail; but the purpose had been lost sight of in the details. The Pharisees had come to think of the Sabbath as so essential that they regarded man as made for the Sabbath, instead of the Sabbath for man.

Christianity, while rooting in Judaism, was actually a new religion, casting aside the forms of Judaism and clothing itself with new forms, adaptable to the new life within. At the outset, it is true, Jewish Christians observed the Jewish rules and even undertook to make the Gentile Christians do the same. That was one of the first battles in the Church, in which Paul was a leader, to claim freedom for the Christians coming in from the outside world. That right of freedom from the Jewish Law was soon established, and indeed the Gentile element in Christianity shortly outnumbered the Jewish element; and, in some points, to assert its sense of the lack of obligation of the old Jewish forms, it adopted forms or practices which were in contrast with those.

As the Jew, making Sabbath (that is rest) on the seventh day, had come to make that also a more special day of worship, the day of the formal synagog gathering, the day for the reading and teaching of the Law and the Prophets, the day of special sacrifices and the like, so the Christian, to mark his separateness and to assert the lack of obligation of old Commandments of forms only, chose a different day for his day of worship, namely the first day of the week. That was the day on which Jesus Christ had risen from the dead, the great and fundamental fact of his religious life and thought. The Christian naturally desired to celebrate the Resurrection, and he made that celebration a weekly celebration on the first day of the week. His choice of that day for a special celebration of the rising of Jesus from the dead became a mark to mark him, as the Jewish observance of the seventh day of the week, the Sabbath, with its abstention from toil, was a mark to mark the Jew. Later, inasmuch as the Jew had Monday and Thursday for his fast days, the Christian took Wednesday and Friday for his fast days. The Christian did not, at the outset, have a day of rest, except as he was a Jew and observed the seventh day Sabbath; and indeed he could not

very well do so. The early Christians were largely slaves and freed men, poor men, almost all, who had to work daily for their living, and generally under the command and for the benefit of others. The very doctrine which they preached, of submission to all the ordinances of man, prevented their asserting, in contradiction to the rules and practices of those about them, a right or obligation to rest from toil upon their day of worship. The essence of their observance of that day was rejoicing in the Resurrection of Jesus, mindfulness of Him, fellowship with one another in that joy.

If you take up the names of the week-days which have come down to us, you will see the difference between the Sabbath and the Lord's Day reflected in many of them. The names of the days of the week which we English speaking people have are heathen throughout, and give no indication of anything of the sort. If you take, however, the names in use among Latin speaking peoples, you will find that Saturday bears the name Sabbath, and Sunday is the Lord's Day.

The very character of Christianity, however, its social nature, its humanity and loving kindness, made it sympathetic with that element of social love, of consideration for the toiler,

expressed in the explanation of the Fourth Commandment in the Book of Deuteronomy, which I read to you as my text. The Christian, too, had been a slave. He had toiled for a hard master and learned, in the practice of his life, the lesson of love which Jesus had taught. When, therefore, the Roman Empire became Christian, the emperor ordained a weekly day of rest from toil, choosing for that day the great day of the Sun, who, to the Christian, was the Sun of Righteousness, Jesus Christ his Lord; and so Sunday was made a day of rest from toil. It was a day of gladness and merry-making, a day not alone of worship, but also of games and pleasure. These were not, however, controlled by the careful regulations and restrictions which had guarded the Jewish Sabbath, and by the Reformation period there had developed certainly a strong tendency to profane Sunday into a mere day of carousal and merry-making.

It was a reaction against this abuse which developed that puritanic conception of Sunday which has given the day a curious and somewhat unique character among English-speaking peoples. With the rediscovery of the Bible, the second generation of reformers began to seek to carry out literally all the provisions of New

and Old Testaments, as they understood them, with some very astonishing results in the development of sects and of strange forms and practices. Old and New Testaments were treated by them as equal. The old Ten Commandments assumed a new place and a new literalness of value. The observance of the first day of the week had fixed itself so strongly that it could not be shaken, and, with the exception of a very few small sects here and there, Protestant Christians accepted the first day of the week as the Sabbath, in spite of the fact that the Fourth Commandment commanded the Sabbath on the seventh day. With that exception they held that Commandment as literally binding; but, being influenced by the conditions of dissipation and frivolity with which they had to contend, they really translated the prohibition of toil into a prohibition of pleasure, thus making the Commandment primarily not a prohibition of toil on the seventh day, but of pleasure, of which, of course, there is no word whatever in the original Commandment.

That was the form in which the Commandment was observed and the spirit in which it was regarded by our forefathers, and our statute books are full to-day of laws resulting from that point of view.

Now what is Sunday for, and how are we to keep it? There are two principles involved in the old Commandment which we should regard as essential. You will observe that the original Commandment is merely "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath Day." The particular day of the week on which it is to fall is not specified. That belongs to the later definitions and restrictions of the command. The two principles involved, which are, I believe, of permanent and eternal importance are:

First: If you would maintain your religion and your religious life, you must have an external mark. You will not maintain it without such a mark, and that mark should be of a character which will bind you, one with another; and which will at the same time make you lay such an obligation upon yourself for the service of God as will keep you conscious of your relation to Him and maintain that idealism which is essential to the life of religion. That is the First principle. Do not forget it. Because you see that there is no essential difference between Sunday and Monday or Friday or Saturday, do not say: "I will, therefore, do on Sunday exactly the same as I do on any other day." You need one day set apart, separate from the other days, to keep you conscious of

your own separation from the lower and the worldly life, to maintain your idealism. Nor can you say: "Well, if that is the case, I will make Tuesday my day; because that is more convenient for me". If you do that you lose something which is essential in religious life: your touch with and your obligation to those about you. You may not live for yourself. You must conform yourself to those who are about you, that you may be their brother; that you may help them and they may help you. You need both. We are none of us wise enough, strong enough or good enough to stand by ourselves, without the help and support of those about us; and everyone of us carries an obligation for those about, to support and help them in their efforts after a better life, after an ideal. Do nothing to pull down the ideal of the community. That is the reason why we should keep one day holy, sharply separated from the days of toil; and we, as a community, have taken the first day of the week for that purpose.

Secondly—and this connects itself with the latter part of what I said under firstly—: make this day a day of relief from toil to those who are laden and overburdened. To do that, you yourself will have to give up something. Not

only will you have to join in the effort to secure laws and the administration of laws which give a day of rest, so that the man who works in a factory or in a shop or on the road shall have a day free from toil; you must even restrict yourself in certain pleasures, because only by so doing can you work with the community to secure and maintain this day of rest for your overburdened brother. In experience he will not get his rest, unless you make stringent the rule against labor on that day and observe it yourself. What will do you no harm as an individual may do society harm by breaking down those safeguards which alone protect the poorest and the weakest. That is the principle on which you must consider the question of toil for yourself or by yourself on that day; and even the question of the pleasures or amusements in which you will indulge.

The Church, under the influence of that Puritan development to which I have alluded, has not, in general, taken as strong and clear a stand with regard to Sunday as it should have done. The tendency of Churchmen has been to concern themselves about pleasures and amusements, the closing of theatres or the prevention of baseball games and the like. Amusements in themselves are not undesirable. They

are desirable for the great mass of the people. It is not desirable to allow the day to be commercialized in its amusements, however; and, in considering what to allow and what not to allow, that should be taken into account. The opening of museums, libraries and the like has, oddly enough, sometimes been opposed by godly Christian people. One would suppose that this would be welcomed everywhere, these being amusements of the very highest intellectual and spiritual character, absolutely uncommercialized, and in accordance with the spirit of the Commandment. What the Church should primarily emphasize is the absolute obligation of every employer to give to his employees a day of rest. It should insist upon it that, if he does not do so, he is disobeying a fundamental law of the religion, not merely of the Jew, but of Jesus Christ, for the law of love, which is the law of Christ, finds its practical expression in such consideration for the life of man.

But, it will be said, there are some forms of business in which it is impossible to stop work on one day in seven. True, it is not impossible, however, so to arrange that work that each individual employee may have one day absolutely free. That is the essence of the obligation of the Commandment in that direction. The prin-

ciple of the Commandment goes further, however, than one day of rest in seven for your servant or your laborer. Under the pinciple of this Commandment, the man is condemned who works his employees such hours on week-days as to give them no pleasure and joy in life, to brutalize them, to take the ideal and the possibility of an ideal out of their lives.

And one thing more. So surely as this Commandment ordains rest on one day, so surely does it predicate the obligation to work. It is as much a condemnation of him or her who does not work his way in this world, who idles and loafes, who is a dilettante, as of the man or woman who obliges his or her employees to work seven days instead of six.

IV.

CHILDREN AND PARENTS

Exodus xx. 12: Honor thy father and thy mother;
that thy days may be long upon the land which the
Lord thy God giveth thee.

♦ **I**N the fifth chapter of Deuteronomy, the
sixteenth verse, we have the form: "Hon-
or thy father and thy mother, as the Lord
thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days
may be prolonged, and that it may go well with
thee, in the land which the Lord thy God giveth
thee". The difference of form is just enough
to show us clearly that the original Command-
ment, the *word*, is "Honor thy father and thy
mother". What follows is a later development,
an attempt to give the philosophy, the motive
of the Commandment.

My theme to-day is "Children and Parents",
and it is the Fifth Commandment which deals
with the child and parent. As it is expressed
here, it sets forth the duty of the child toward
the parent. Our Church Catechism sums up the
obligation of the old Commandments under the
headings: "Thy duty towards God", and "Thy
duty towards thy neighbor". This Command-
ment is included under the duty toward the
neighbor; but that was not the ancient concep-

tion. It is the last Commandment of the first table. Each table contained five words. This was the fifth word of the first table. The obligation of a child toward its parents was a part of the obligation toward God. The Hebrew never reached actual ancestor worship, as many other peoples did, but he came very close to it, and his conception of the obligation of a child to its parent is a part of his conception of the obligation toward the powers above, the divine, not a part of his conception of the obligation toward his fellows.

The ancient world in general would have been shocked and startled by the proposition that the relation of a child to its parent was the relation of a person to his neighbor. The old idea of the relation of a parent to the child was the idea of the relation of authority and fear. The child was the property of the parent, the child existed for the parent. The parent had absolute right over the child, the right of bringing or not bringing it into the world, the right of life or death, the right to sell it into slavery, the right to the earnings of the child. The child existed for the advantage of the parent; and that relation continued in general until that child, in its turn, became a parent. Even then the rule of reverence and fear still prevailed.

In the Greek and Roman practice you find abortion, infanticide, exposure of children after birth, not uncommon, and permitted, if not sanctioned by law. In Hebrew practice you find, at the outset certainly, the parent possessing the right of life and death. For his own advantage a parent may sacrifice his child to God. Jephthah makes a vow that, if he wins the victory, he will sacrifice the first that comes to meet him from his house. That proves to be his daughter, and there is no question as to his obligation to sacrifice her. Similarly Abraham would have sacrificed Isaac; but the end of that story of Abraham's would be sacrifice of Isaac represents the coming in of a newer and higher idea among the Hebrews. Their God does not demand and ultimately does not permit the sacrifice of children. To be sure, for a long time the practice of the offering by parents of their children to their God for their advantage continued among the Hebrews, as among the people about them. Dearly they loved those children and much they desired them. The first born son was the very best thing a man had, and, just because it was the best, he had to give it to God. This sacrifice the Hebrew law forbids, and ultimately they eradicated the practice. First the law

substituted a sheep or a goat for the sacrifice of a child. Finally, under very stringent penalties, every man was forbidden to sacrifice his child to the deity.

The right of life and death continued, however. The child which rebels against the parental law, the child that strikes or curses its parents, forfeits its life precisely as if it had rebelled against God or cursed God; but in the Hebrew Law, as we have it in its later phases, codified in the Pentateuch, the right to inflict the penalty of death is taken away from the parent. That must be done by the community, under legal forms. But even after the life of the child has been thus guarded, the Hebrew still regards the child as made for the profit of the parent. The parent may sell his child into slavery and the parent in need frequently did sell his son or his daughter into slavery.

When Nehemiah comes from Persia, to restore Jerusalem and to reorganize the Jewish people, he finds that the poorer classes of the people have become dependents, practically serfs of the few richer ones who have acquired all the land, and that the poorer classes are compelled to sell their sons and daughters into slavery. He is shocked by this condition. A higher conception of the value of life is enter-

ing in. He compels a readjustment on the lines of human rights, if I may use a modern distinction, without, however, abolishing the authority of parents over children. Later the grown child was permitted to buy off the parental right by a payment to God called *corban*.

But, while such is the relation of parent to child prevailing throughout the Old Testament period, we find, on the other hand, manifold allusions to the joy of parenthood, to the love of children. So, in what we call the Songs of Degrees, those Psalms from 120 to 134 which were composed by the pilgrims of Nehemiah's time and thereabouts, Jews of the captivity making their pilgrimages from Babylonia and Persia to Jerusalem, there are some of the most beautiful pictures of the joy of family life, and of the blessing of children, which one can imagine; and indeed, as regards the value of children and the obligation of bringing children into the world, the Hebrew occupied a high position, whatever the source of his inspiration. Part of that inspiration was the conception of the unity of life between the father and the child; that the continuance of the parental life depended upon the children. The man thought of himself not as a separate individual, but as part of a family which he must continue and in-

crease. In this he achieved the greatest good that could be accomplished, and by this he propagated his own life immortally. Without children to care for his tomb, to pray for him, to preserve the family name, he died eternally.

Now, in the development of civilization, this family relation was a necessity for the conservation of knowledge and the promotion of progress. That the father and mother might pass down that which they had achieved, which they had accomplished, undiminished to their offspring, it was necessary that such a relation should be established. If you left the care and training of children merely to the community you took away that element of personal love, of personal pride, that element of personality which is the most powerful force in human progress, which is the highest element in human life. No community can give to a child what the highest parenthood can give it, because the community has not that personal relation to the child, cannot impart that personality which the individual love of a parent enables it to impart.

The same thing has happened in many places, however, with regard to this relation of parent to child and child to parent, which happens in the treatment of all good things. The very

perception of the importance of this relation of parent and child led to over-emphasis and abuse, so that, in places, while it conserved what had been achieved, it tended to prevent further advance,—as in China, to use a familiar and modern illustration. There the reverence and honor due to a parent forbade the child to improve upon or to change that which the parent had done. The wisdom of the elders was like the infinite wisdom of God, unchangeable, to be accepted unquestionably. To some extent this evil is to be found in the conservative traditions of European society which prevailed before the French revolution. That revolution and the foundation of this republic did much to change that, and naturally, in the reaction which ensued, we have inclined to go somewhat too far, to lose the true perception of the value of reverence toward the old, of tradition, of honor for parents, of the obligation of the child toward the parent. We have tended toward an extreme individualism, commencing with the birth of the child into the world, a tendency to ignore the importance of its relation to the past, and more especially its own past, in its parents; to cultivate irreverence instead of reverence, disobedience instead of obedience, with as a result that condition of

lawlessness which confronts us, particularly in this country, to-day.

Now what is the Christian attitude toward this Commandment? What is the great and eternal obligation there expressed? Jesus was full of tenderness for the little ones. "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God". He took them up in His arms, He laid His hands upon them and blessed them. "Their angels do always behold the face of my Father, which is in heaven". His teaching of the Kingdom is based on the teaching of the relation of man to God as a Father, and indeed in some of the language which He uses with regard to little children He does not mean little children in your sense and mine exactly. He has a broader view of all of us as little children in relation to our Father in heaven, of the blessedness and beauty of that relation which would let us come to our Father as little children on earth come to their fathers, which would keep us fresh, childlike in our thoughts and minds, so that we shall so submit ourselves, so regard ourselves. But His conception of the relation of the Father to His children is quite different from the older conception of the Hebrew. The thought which the Israelite had of the relation

of father to child on earth express itself also in his view of the relation of God to the children of Israel. For His own glory He made them; for His own honor He must interfere to help them. He lived in them. There was a wonderful love express in that, but it was a love that partook of self-advantage, that His honor might be shown forth, that He might have the glory, that he might be profited by their achievements, by their obedience to His laws. In wrath He smote them for their sins. He was minded utterly to blot them out; but He could not do so, because they were His life, and to do so would be to slay Himself.

But Jesus represents a Father who loves without thought of self, who gives himself to die for His children, who suffers in their woes. As Christianity pictures the death of Christ, it is the revelation of the heart of the Father in Heaven bleeding with the suffering and the sin of His children, for God the Father is a God of infinite sympathy and love. He would teach us to love by His love, and would win our reverence and our honor by the abasement of himself, even to a shameful death for our redemption. This is the reverse of the old idea of the sacrifice of the son. In the Christian conception the Son is of the same essence with the

Father, and so we were begotten of the Father, not for His own profit, but out of His infinite love, that we might have eternal felicity; and what Christianity thus expresses of the relation of the parent to the child, we are now translating into action.

But we are in danger, in the advance of civilization, of losing our perception of the value of certain great fundamental, primal truths and thoughts, although they lie at the base of this new development: The parent for the child, not the child for the parent; The highest thing in life to bring life into the world; A sin to deny the right of that life to come; A crime to destroy it on its way; The right of the child born into the world to live its life; That it is not there for the profit of the parent, as a commercial asset; That the obligation rests upon the parent to give that child its inheritance of himself, not merely in supplying and feeding its body, but in imparting to it all the knowledge, all the achievement of his age, in order to put that child abreast of the age into which he is born, to equip it to go on and achieve greater things.

So we have passed and are passing laws to prevent the exploitation of children in factories and the like. But we are still met by that old idea of the relation of parent and child which

has so much of selfishness in it; that the child is there for the profit of the parents; that, brought with pain and trouble into the world, it must pay for itself and something more. Thoughtlessly, without realization of what life is, parents bring their children into the world to find them a burden, either because they are actually so poor that it is hard to find the bread to put into the mouth of another, or more often because of that selfish desire which parents have for their own advancement, for good things for themselves which they are not ready to sacrifice for the benefit of the little life that has come into the world. Sometimes, on the other hand, children are handicapped by a false conception on the parent's part of what is good for its child, by the idea that the best that parents can give their children is to so provide for them that they will not have to toil, to accumulate enough property to preclude the necessity or even the possibility of their laboring, and to educate them accordingly. No greater curse can any parent lay upon his children than to take away from them the need and the power to labor.

To the best development of man and woman alike children are a necessity, to keep them in touch with the sweet love of God, with the

spirit of service and of sacrifice, to prevent them from growing selfish, self-centered, set in their whims and ways and imagined necessities. The words "old maid" and "old bachelor" have come to have a meaning of reproach, not because a noble woman, not finding her mate, with a heart full of maternal love, has lived single, but because the woman who is not mated is so often selfish, whimsical, set in her little ways, one who has lost the precious, eternal, self-sacrificing love. That is the old maid, and in the other sex the crusty old bachelor. The training of a child is the best training for life eternal of the parent.

But do not forget the dangers that lie in the present child movement; the danger of over play, the danger of not giving the child the hard things. No good work will be done in life by those who do not labor. You cannot make the teaching and training of a child all play and fun without ruining that child. To give it the inspiration of true love for its work, of zest and zeal for it, you must compel labor and toil. You can have no memory unless you have trained that memory, trained it by hard—make them as little dull as you can—repetitions and recitations, learning by rote, fixing facts, figures, words in the mind. No child can become a

musician simply because it loves music and has the soul of music in it. It will always be an idle, worthless dilettante, with music enough to spoil everything else in life, but not enough to be of value, unless you have made it practice, go through the dull, hard routine of practice. And how are you going to get the inspiration that will carry children through that? Not duty first; that develops more slowly. It must be the personal love—of a teacher, it may be, of a parent, it should be, first and foremost; a love that evokes trust in that parent, in the word of that parent, that parent's guidance, until the child mind is open to understand and see what is ahead. Then duty becomes a reasonable thing, and heart and brain are joined together. But any parent who has a perception of what a child may be and an earnest, self forgetful love for that child, who desires for his child really great things, will find an impelling power laid upon himself to conquer selfishness, to conquer low habits and desires, that he may stand before his child as one to be loved with that highest love, which is full of respect; giving himself for his child and, in giving himself, winning both a higher love and a higher character, a character which shall make his child honor him next to God.

V.
LIFE.

Exodus xx. 13-14: Thou shalt do no murder.
Thou shalt not commit adultery.



Y theme this morning is "Life." My text is those two Commandments which deal with the destruction and the construction of life, the first two Commandments in the second table of the old Hebrew code, the table dealing with duty toward the one that is nigh unto you, originally the duty of the Hebrew toward his fellow Hebrew.

These Commandments were, at the outset, tribal Commandments. The Hebrew code embodied in itself what you may call the necessary Commandments of tribal life, laws without which the tribal relation could not be conserved. The Commandment "Thou shalt not kill" did not prevent the Israelite from killing the man who was not an Israelite. Indeed in the older times it was considered his obligation to exterminate peoples who were not of kin to him, who did not possess the same religions and customs. We are somewhat startled when we read in the Old Testament of what seems to us to-day the atrocity of the conduct of the political and

spiritual leaders of the Israelites toward the Canaanites and others with whom they came in contact. So Samuel most roundly condemns Saul for failing to murder the unfortunate king of the Amalekites, whom he had taken prisoner in war. "Thou shalt not kill" had no application, in the mind of the old Hebrews, to foreigners. The life of his fellow Israelite was to be most jealously guarded. It was to be sacred to him, and Israelite was to be bound to Israelite by the sacredness of tribal life, so that each might trust the other, and the whole have the strength of perfect confidence of all in all.

Now, that accomplished a very important thing. Living among Arabs in the stage of progress from Bedawin into settled life, I was interested to observe the importance to tribal existence of this Commandment, and the difficulty of making those Arabs accept it as their real standard. The Sheik of one of the tribes with whom I first came in contact had killed his uncle in his sleep in order to make himself chief; and a little later, while I was still in contact with that tribe, he was killed by another uncle, who made himself chief. Each chief lived in a little castle, into which he admitted only his wives and children and a slave or two, with a very few trusted rela-

tives on whom he believed he could rely. Outside, about his castle, camped the members of his tribe who tilled his land, standing toward him somewhat in the relation which the Highland Scot, of a couple of hundred years ago occupied toward his chief. But the strength resulting from confidence in one another was lacking. The chief had to be constantly on his guard. He could not trust his own. To make a strong tribe, much more to weld a number of tribes into a nation, it was necessary to establish the sanctity of the life of fellow tribesmen. That is the fundamental thing in the relation of tribesman to tribesman, and so it is put at the head of the table of ancient Hebrew laws dealing with the duties of Hebrews toward one another.

But there is another law instinctive in man and beast,—the law of revenge for injury done. If you strike me, I will strike you. Life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, blow for blow. When you have established family solidarity, the whole family stands together in the fulfilment of this obligation of revenge. In every primitive society you find that. It finds expression in the feuds of Corsica, of our own Blue and Allegheny Mountains, and in the blood revenge of the Arabs. If one of my fam-

ily has injured one of your family, then you and your family not only may, but must take toll of me or my family for that injury. That was a condition with which the Hebrew had to contend, and, in his attempt to apply this law, "Thou shalt not kill," to the tribe and then to the nation, it was necessary first to take account of this apparently natural, almost instinctive, law of family revenge.

If you will trace Hebrew legislation, you will find the right of blood revenge being taken out of private hands and put in the hands of the state. First of all private revenge was limited by the provision of sanctuaries. The man who had killed (and note that to kill unintentionally originally involved blood revenge, just as much as killing intentionally) might, if he could, take refuge in a sanctuary. If it were proved that the killing was unintentional, then, after a certain time and under certain conditions, he was to have safety for his life. If the killing were intentional, however, then his life was forfeit to the family whose blood he had shed. Ultimately the right of execution was taken out of the hands of the family and put in the hands of the state.

But even to-day, in highly civilized Christian countries, we have not gotten altogether be-

yond the idea of private revenge. It keeps cropping up, not merely in primeval and semi-barbarous communities, like the mountaineers of whom I have spoken, but even in more civilized strata of the community. So, for example, where a man has killed another, under certain conditions, in revenge for certain injuries, a jury will acquit him in many if not most parts of this country; while in Europe you find such highly Christian potentate as the present Emperor of Germany obstinately defending the right of duelling, which is nothing but the old barbarous and heathen custom of private revenge. In general, however, we have passed out of the state of private revenge, or even of revenge in any form. In modern penology we have theoretically abolished revenge, so that, when a man is put to death by the community, it is not for revenge, but for the prevention of crime, for the protection of the community at large; which is an application really of Jesus' teaching with regard to the Sixth Commandment.

You will find, in the fifth chapter of St. Matthew, a commentary by Jesus on the Commandment "Thou shalt do no murder", which also shows you something of the interpretation and obligation of that Commandment among

the Jews in Jesus' day. He says: "Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment; but I say unto you, that every one who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the Judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; and whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of the hell of fire."

The original Commandment was "Thou shalt not kill." As enforced by the community, whosoever killed was in danger of condemnation and execution by the civil tribunal. But not only that, the principle of the Commandment had been applied also in the matter of libel, for to strike with the tongue is as dangerous to character and to the welfare of the spirit as a blow with a club or a sword is to the body and to the physical well being of the man. With the advance of civilization, there had come to be a recognition of the higher life and the application of this Commandment to that higher or spiritual life. Therefore a law of libel had been enacted under which certain terms of abuse were forbidden. Jesus specifies one provision of that law. It was forbidden to call a man "Raca", empty, good-for-nothing, because

that hurt his character, made him despicable in the sight of those about. Whosoever thus spoke of his fellow Jew might be brought before the national religious council, the Sanhedrim, and punished.

Jesus lays down a higher law, not dealing with human judgment or with human courts, but with the great divine realities which lie at the root of the whole matter. He who kills is in danger of judgment by the courts of men, but, in the great realities of the universe, judgment touches not alone the outward act but the spirit behind. "Whosoever is angry with his brother is in danger of the judgment of God."

Note how difficult it has been for men to grasp the real meaning of the teaching of Jesus. If you take up your King James' Version of the Bible, this is what you will find there: "Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause is in danger of the judgment", as though it were right and proper to harbor anger, if cause is given for that anger. That is not what Jesus said. It contradicts the whole spirit of His teaching, as you find it further on in this same chapter. Nor were those words, *without a cause*, in the original text of the Gospel. That was a comment which men of a later date put in; subjecting themselves to the same rebuke

which Jesus once bestowed on Peter: "Get thee behind me Satan." Hear what actually Jesus said about our proper relation to one against whom we have, as we might think, a cause of anger: "Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy; but I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be sons of your Father which is in heaven."

Similarly Jesus applies the old law to injury done to the character, the mind, the feelings of another. Libel, in God's court, does not lie in any particular word. You may not call your brother Raca, good-for-nothing, but neither may you call him dog, or heathen, or infidel or any thing else intended to hurt his reputation, to injure him in his feelings. "I say unto you that whosoever calls his brother fool (that is, uses toward him any word of contempt or contumely) is in danger of the hell of fire." Jesus applies to the interpretation of the Commandment, "Thou shalt do no murder," the great primal Commandment which He came to teach men: the Commandment of love. What? To harbor anger, hatred in your heart? How can you do this and be in touch with, in communion with the God of love, who so loved you that He gave His only begotten Son to the end that you

might not perish, but have everlasting life? Malice, hatred poisons your nature. Even physically it has its effects upon you; mentally and morally it incapacitates you for the higher things, it shuts you out of the kingdom of God. To enter into that relation of love with your brother binds the members of a family one to another, in complete confidence, unites family with family to form a community, and community with community to form a nation; and ultimately it must prevail as the law of the world, for in Jesus' teaching it is not merely the fellow Jew who is your brother, the man of your own kin, the man of your own community, the man of your own nation: we are all brothers, children of one Father in heaven.

The first object of this Commandment was a national one. It was necessary to bind the Israelites in a relation of confidence with one another, to make them feel the sacredness of the life of the Israelite. It aimed at the complete prohibition of the shedding of the blood of an Israelite by an Israelite. But that by itself was something impossible of attainment. We are so bound with one another in this world that the conditions of those outside affect us within, and if we try to limit our good to our own family, our own community, our own nation, our

efforts are frustrated by our necessary connections with the world about us. And again, what is to be achieved can in the end be achieved only most imperfectly by prohibition. The law, to be finally effective, must touch all, and it must be not a prohibition of action, but a direction to action. Prohibition may be a necessary phase, but it can only be a temporary one. Your law must be phrased in another form for its final realization. Something you must do: You must love your brother, you must regard his life as your life; you must be ready to bear and forbear with him and to give yourself for him; and when that has been done, then you will find that he is divine, as you are divine. He is a child of God, as you are a child of God, and he will forbear and bear with you as you have forborne and borne with him, and he will give his life for you as you give your life for him. That is the teaching of Jesus with regard to this Commandment.

And now its mate: "Thou shalt not commit adultery." Very primitive! It is no prohibition of fornication. It regards the woman whom a man has taken as his wife as his. No one may touch her. If another touches her, he will fall on that man. Why should the state note this relation? For two reasons: First of all, because,

for a state to exist, it must maintain the family relation. It is through family units that the tribe, the nation, is built up. The state cannot allow that relation to be interfered with. And again, however it comes about, the man is almost as fiercely conscious of his right in that woman as of his right to his own life. If you touch him there, you touch him almost in the center of his being. Therefore, if you are going to maintain a relation of friendship and confidence among the members of your tribe or nation, you must protect this relation of the man's wife to the man. There is the beginning.

I shall not burden you with tracing in the Hebrew law and practice the developments that took place, the development of higher relations. Very early in the higher prophetic Hebrew literature you perceive them. The wife is made out of the man, she is part of him and they cleave to one another as one flesh. You cannot read prophetic literature without perceiving how the domestic life of the prophets, their relation of love to their wives, affected their whole being and led them into higher thought: an Ezekiel, mourning for the wife of his love; a Hosea, loving the wife that was faithless and out of that love drawing his wonderful doctrine of the indefeasible love of the Lord God for Israel, the

wife of His youth who had forsaken Him and become a harlot! Yet He could never forget her nor utterly cast her off, but must seek to save her and bring her back to himself.

In the time of Jesus, for all practical purposes, the Jews were monogamists. They possessed and used rights of divorce which we would not allow, even in Dakota or Reno; but the relation of man and wife, whatever the forms and outward expressions of the law might be, had come to be set on a different plane from that of mere property right. The peculiar, almost sacramental sanctity of that relation between man and woman by which life is or should be brought into the world had come to be recognized. The foundation had been laid for that interpretation which Jesus put spiritually upon this Commandment: "Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, that every one that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Here we have reached the relation of spiritual life, the fundamental truth, which is behind all expressions of outward law: the relation of man and woman, by which they are made one, is not the mere animal relation of sex. The sex relation exists for the propagation of life, but life in its foundation is love, and

the proper exercise of the sexual relation between man and woman is founded on the conception of love: not merely animal passion, but love which has in it the element of sacrifice, of forgetfulness of self.

The family, as I tried to point out to you last Sunday, in dealing with the Fifth Commandment, the true family is founded on that same conception. The relation of parent to child is the relation of giving, not getting, of forgetting yourself for the sake of the other; of giving your life into the new life that you have brought into the world, that that life may grow to be greater and more glorious than your own.

Monogamy has been established. The old satisfaction of the lust of the male under the laws of polygamy and concubinage has been forbidden; but, in establishing monogamy, the world came face to face with a new and most serious danger. For the protection of the race and the family society instinctively felt that the purity of the woman must be guarded; and centuries and centuries of training have drilled that in. We have organized our society so as to guard and protect that, to make it easy for the woman to walk in the path of purity and to make it terribly hard and cruel for her to step outside of it. Woman herself has accepted this standard, and

she is more exacting in her demands upon her own sex than is the man, and she is more cruel to the sister that fails to keep that law of purity than is the man.

But, on the other hand, we have, with legal monogamy, allowed to grow up a system of something worse, so far as the individual man is concerned, than polygamy or concubinage. We have allowed the man to satisfy his passion or desire outside of marriage, to make that satisfaction a matter of barter and sale. We have allowed him to buy the use of women to satisfy his physical desire, and we have outlawed and degraded the women who engage in that commerce with him. We have allowed an environment to grow up which makes it almost as hard for a man to be pure as for a woman to be impure, so that young fellows are scoffed and jeered at if they do not make beasts of themselves, if they do not surrender themselves as slaves to their desires and debase what is their most glorious heritage, the heritage of life, to shame and dishonor. So we have prostitution, and you will hear men venturing to speak of it as a necessary evil. Not long since you would find doctors actually telling men that they might or should debase themselves by intercourse with prostitutes, recommending it for

their physical good. It has been a disgusting and shameful chapter in the history of civilization, this story of prostitution; the debasement of the gift of life, of the highest function of which man is capable to a level below the level of the beasts; the commercializing of the honor of women by their sale to satisfy mere lust. It has been a horrible thing. It has meant a sacrifice of thousands and thousands annually to a death of misery, physical, mental and moral. They are killed in a way more atrocious and more horrible than any of the murders perpetrated by cannibals. The sacrifices to Moloch, the old Indian car of Juggernaut, are not to be compared with this sacrifice. There is no more horrible and loathsome form of sacrifice which the world has ever invented. Selfishness, self-indulgence on the part of men, is the god to whom this vast number of victims is sacrificed every year.

But prostitution has had another effect. God has so made us that to tamper with the sources of life is the most disastrous thing physically which we can do. We are such fools—worse than the fabled ostrich who stuck his head in the sand and supposed that his great body and his long legs were safely concealed from his pursuers! We have raised a great alarm in this

country and throughout the civilized world about tuberculosis. We have frightened people so that the poor fellow who has tuberculosis and seeks a place where he can go and live has a hard time to find one. People will ruthlessly and cruelly drive him out of their doors for fear that he shall infect them and their children. Diseases much more infectious, diseases demanding a greatly larger toll of human life are allowed to go free in the community. If a doctor has such a case, he not only does not report it to the Board of Health, but it is a professional law that it should be kept absolutely secret; and a man infected by such disease may and does, time and time again, marry and convey the disease to the woman he marries and to the little children that are born. In all common sense we have got to come to a different position. We have got to speak of these things, we have got to teach these things, that by knowledge we may help to minimize the danger. A good part of the evil is caused by the ignorance that exists to-day. Knowledge alone will not cure it, however. We want something more. We want a higher ideal, that ideal which is expressed in Jesus' doctrine of love. We have raised the standard of virtue for women to a high plane. We have got to bring man to the same standard

and put the same environment about man that he also may be pure. Society must demand purity in the man and protect it as it does in the woman.

And we Christians who claim Jesus as our Master, His life as our model, who interpret nature and the world and the old Commandments from and through Him, we need to understand this Commandment as He taught it; as one which goes into the very thoughts of our hearts, that we should protect ourselves there. How often you go among decent men and hear the doubtful joke, the thing which cannot be spoken in the face of women! and those things which are really the most sacred and the highest things in life are turned into jest and defiled.

In literature we are, at the present moment, at a place of cross seas. We have been foolish, prudish in the way we spoke about things. Men are conscious now that these things should be discussed. There are, however, a good many who wish to discuss them simply to make money, who do not discuss them with some higher motive, who bring nastiness into them. And so a dangerous literature has grown up. We have not yet come, in general, to frank, free speaking on these subjects, and we are in this anomalous condition: people who would be

afraid to have sex matters plainly spoken of before the young, and especially before their daughters, will not hesitate to read, or to have in their houses, permitting both sons and daughters to read them, books which, by their method of reference to sex and their suggestions about sex relations, are more dangerous than poison; books which jest on the broken marriage vow, or throw a glamor over vicious passions. They take their children to see plays which, in spirit, are vile; but they would not let them go to a play which frankly and from a higher standpoint discusses these things. And what of marriage? The Social Service Commission of this Diocese has issued a little paper about marriage, part of which I wish to read you as the conclusion of my discourse this morning:

“One antidote to sexual vice is marriage, and the Church’s relation to this institution should be given grave consideration. Should she not enter upon the systematic campaign to promote the practice of marriage, at the same time exercising herself to assure, as far as she may, the domestic happiness that should ensue? The number of unmarried men and women is too large. Cannot the Church contribute to diminish this? It is my belief that she should address herself to the task. But her mission is essen-

tially positive, and however properly she may co-operate with society in the restrictive measures which it has a right to demand for its protection, she owes it to herself to make practical presentation of a "more excellent way." May not the Church, then, intelligently and persuasively present to young men and women the importance of matrimony, and at the same time adopt measures to qualify them for married life. If the Church systematically undertook to see to it that its marriageable young men and women were morally and mentally qualified for the marital relations and home-making, it would be apt to make them better members of the Church and of society. There would at least be fewer unhappy marriages if, as Dean Swift said, 'the women learned how to make nests rather than to spread nets', and certain it is that matrimony would hold out greater inducements to young men if they felt they had a reasonable assurance that their wives would be qualified by practical training to make the home happy."

VI.

PROPERTY.

Exodus xx. 15: Thou shalt not steal.

Exodus xx. 17: Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.



Y topic this morning is "Property" and my text the Eighth and Tenth Commandments. Deuteronomy gives us the Tenth Commandment in a form slightly different from that in which it appears in Exodus, as follows: "Neither shalt thou covet thy neighbor's wife; neither shalt thou desire thy neighbor's house, his field or his manservant, or his maidservant, his ox, or his ass, or any thing that is thy neighbor's." There is just enough difference between the two to show you that the actual original Commandment or word was "Thou shalt not covet", the rest being the application of this Commandment in detail. The different forms in which the detailed application appear are evidence of an advance in thought. In Exodus the Commandment reads: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house," and house is defined as consisting of first, the wife, then the slaves, male and female; then the

beasts of burden, plus household goods and miscellaneous belongings, i. e., everything that belongs to the neighbor. The man's family, his wife and children, are here looked upon as part of his household, that is, part of his property, his possessions.

In Deuteronomy the wife and family are taken out of that category, so that the Commandment reads first: "Neither shalt thou covet thy neighbor's wife." Then follows the household: 'Neither shalt thou covet thy neighbor's house, nor his land, his slaves, male and female, his cattle, nor anything else that is his'. You are dealing with a people in a more advanced state of civilization, both on the material side (here for instance you find land occupying an important place, whereas it is not mentioned in Exodus), and also on the higher side of the family relation. The wife stands with the man, and the children of course are included in the same category. The family is no longer mere property.

Analyze this Commandment more closely and still another advance becomes apparent in the history of its development. The word translated "covet" did not originally have that meaning, I think. The original meaning of the word was "oppress." This Commandment was a

sort of gather-up Commandment, at the end of the second table of the Law, designed for the control and protection of the Israelite in his relations with his fellows. He was forbidden to kill, to violate his neighbor's wife, to steal, to bear false witness against his neighbor, or in any other way to oppress or injure his neighbor. Pretty soon it becomes evident that to be made effective this must apply to the inner relations; not merely to the outward acts, but to the attitude of the man toward his neighbor; and the Commandment which originally forbade an Israelite to oppress or to distress his fellow Israelite in any way came to be a prohibition of desiring in his heart that which belonged to his neighbor, a command not to covet, because any covetousness toward his neighbor would inevitably lead him to oppress his neighbor, even though he might not murder him, or rob him of his wife, or his goods, or his good name.

Here, then, is the development of this Commandment: first a prohibition of injury to his neighbor in some way not covered by the specific provisions of the preceding Commandments; then its interpretation as applying to the attitude of the man toward his neighbor, in coveting or desiring that which belonged to him; then the addition of details to show just what

must not be coveted. First this covered the man's household, consisting of his wife, his slaves, his cattle and the various household utensils and the like which he possessed. Then, as the status of Israelite civilization progresses, house and land become important and the household is thought of as including the house itself, land, slaves and beasts of all sorts, implements, household utensils, furniture and the like; but the man's family, his wife and children have ceased to be matters of property. A man may not covet nor desire his neighbor's wife, but, in the detailed application of the Commandment, she is put in a place by herself, and not included under property.

To-day is Palm Sunday. The services of our Church make actually no provision for and no allusion to the events of the first Palm Sunday. The Bible lessons and the Collect, Epistle and Gospel for the day deal with the Passion and death of our Lord. We commence that sequence of reading which, during the week, is to take us through the story of His Passion and death, as given in all the Gospels, and the prayers run in the same channel; but, while this is true, custom and practice have made this day the commemoration of Jesus' entry into the Temple on the first day of the week of his Crucifixion, and

the cleansing of that Temple from them that sold and bought there. He entered Jerusalem in triumph, greeted by hosts as a King, looked to with an expectation, reaching from the merest curiosity up to actual belief, that He would show himself the Christ whom the Jews expected, who was to drive out the hated Roman, restore the ancient kingdom of David in still more glorious fashion, and give the chosen people of God dominion in the earth. When He came into the courts of the Temple, He found them full of money changers and of them that bought and sold. Commercialism had entered into the very heart of the life and religion of the people. The things by which they had sought to separate themselves from heathen profanation and enter into communion with God had been made the means of barter and trade. So far from setting Himself at their head, to cast out the hated Romans, Jesus turned on them, and called on them to put away this commercialism from their hearts. He cast out all them that sold and bought in the Temple, and overthrew the tables of the money changers and the seats of them that sold the doves, "And He saith unto them: It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer, but ye make it a den of robbers."

The poet, Lowell, musing on the life and the religion of Christians, seeking the mystic meaning of the inmost mysteries of the Christian faith, finds himself confronted with the same commercialism and, in his "Vision of Sir Launfal", makes this plaint:

"Earth gets its price for what Earth gives us;
 The beggar is taxed for a corner to die in,
 The priest hath his fee who comes and shrives
 us,
 We bargain for the graves we lie in;
 At the devil's booth are all things sold,
 Each ounce of dross costs its ounce of gold;
 For a cap and bells our lives we pay,
 Bubbles we buy with a whole soul's tasking:
 'Tis heaven alone that is given away,
 'Tis only God may be had for the asking."

Is barter and sale, then, all wrong? Has the conception of property right and property honesty been not an advantage but a detriment in the development of civilization? The meaning and the value of property ownership, property honesty, in the development of that character and those virtues which constitute civilized man as over against the barbarian, are set forth in the Bible in the tale of Jacob and Esau. In

large part this is historical. It philosophizes upon and explains, in the form of a story, the difference between the Israelite and the Edomite. Why had Jacob advanced? Why did he receive the blessing of God and why did Esau, the Edomite, lack that blessing? Esau was the thriftless savage, with kindly and high impulses, the hunter, the warrior,—but the man who lived for the moment only. To satisfy his hunger, his appetite, whatever it was, of the hour, he would give away everything. You might almost fancy that, in the story of Jacob and Esau, you had a picture of our white forefathers and their dealings with the red Indians of this continent. Jacob was willing to labor and to wait, not to satisfy his appetite and desire, just as they came to him, at any cost. He would starve, he would toil, he would bow himself down to the ground, that he might secure things which he realized were good. He was tricky, servile, dishonest; and yet, after all, with a possibility of development and of spirituality which did not lie in Esau. Jacob is a picture of the Jew the world over, of that which gives him power; and, with all his trickiness, with all his servility, we cannot but recognize that the Jew has been an agent of advance in things intellectual and in things spiritual. He has been a civilization builder.

The object of these two commandments, "Thou shalt not steal," and "Thou shalt not oppress or injure in any way," finally developed into "Thou shalt not covet", and then made applicable to all the goods and properties of the neighbor, was to develop the character of the Israelites just by this development of the sense of personal property, with the personal obligation and personal self-control, thrift, working for a purpose, that accompany that conception of personal property. These Commandments had to do at first merely with the fellow Israelite. They were to bind Israelite to Israelite, to ensure the protection of the individual rights of each.

It is the same thing which takes place in a household. You know that, in dealing with children, you secure a distinct advance by giving the children things of their own, by creating and protecting ownership. By that you develop a sense of responsibility; you educate the child in character. It is perfectly true that there is a serious danger connected with this, the danger of making the child selfish, too much engrossed with material things.

As you deal with children, so you deal with human beings in inferior grades of civilization. One great element in the development of the

negroes in the south has been the teaching of the property want, making them desire and work for land and house and cattle and household possessions; developing in them a keen sense of something approaching a property right in their own women, as the first stage toward developing higher morality; making them realize that to take that which belongs to another is a heinous offense.

This idea of property right and property obligation has been fundamental in the development of our civilization. It is not only in the Old Testament that you see it. When you come to read the history of our barbarian forbears of German ancestry, you will see how that same property idea had to be developed in order to insure progress. It expresses itself in crude forms, so that, as we study their laws, every thing seems to be valued by money. If a man kill another, he pays a price. Life is not regarded so highly as money. But then, even we have not yet altogether gotten this out of our legal system. To be sure, we do not to-day put a man to death for theft, or make him a slave; but we still tend to measure the liberty to commit crime by money, letting a man pay for his misdeeds. Modern penology, which attempts to make punishment not revenge, but correc-

tion and education, finds itself confronted with this old idea of paying a price, which has come down from our German forbears.

The original organization of Hebrew society was tribal. A number of tribes were united together to form a nation. One God was given to this whole body of tribes, and a simple, fundamental law, intended to unite all the tribes in one, making the life and the property of each respected by all the others. It was a long time, however, before the nation was fully developed; and so, when you study property laws among the Hebrews, you find them first applied to the tribes. The land belonged to the tribe. It was allotted in individual shares, as we are attempting to allot to the Indians; but, just as we find among the Indians that, until they have got the property sense well developed, it is necessary to protect them against themselves, so it was found among the Hebrews that it was necessary to protect men against their own lack of thrift, of consideration of the future. Accordingly it was provided that the land might not in any case be alienated from the tribe. Behind the individual stood the tribe. While individual allotments were made, a man could not dispose of his allotment outside of the tribe

and, with a view gradually to develop the individual sense of ownership, it was provided that at certain periods there should be a redistribution, because the land would tend to get into the hands of a few persons in the tribe, who possessed more thrift, more industry, more foresight, more of the material virtues of civilization.

Fully this was never carried out, and in its final theoretical developments, as you see them in the last shape of the Levitical law, it was impracticable, and is simply the expression of a theological idea.

Now the object of this was to develop the individual sense. In all advance in civilization that has taken place. The commune, the community possession, has given way to individual possession. Modern civilization has shown the most tremendous development of this individualism, and the United States represents it in its extremest form. It develops ambition, inventiveness, self-dependence, self-reliance; but we have become conscious that it can go too far and that, without proper care, the same condition will be reached among us which was reached among the Jews in the time of Nehemiah, where all property had fallen into the hands of the few. They owned the land, they

owned the capital, and the plainer and poorer people were simply their slaves. Under the conditions of those days men were literally sold, or were liable to sale for debt, and their sons, their wives and their daughters could be treated as so many chattels. We do not have literally that condition, but we have something that is approaching it:—the accumulation of property, land and capital, modes of transportation and means of transportation, industries, etc. in the hands of a very small number, with the great mass virtually dependent on them, virtually enslaved by their needs, combined with their lack of land and capital.

Throughout our whole civilization there is, at the present moment, a struggle against this development of individualism. Various conditions have made that struggle more immediately necessary and more successful in its achievements in Europe than here. Socialists, as a political power, have developed amazingly all over Europe, and European governments have taken steps in socialization which would seem to us in this country of the most radical character; but here, also, the question is stirring as to the rights of men in property: what constitutes property of the individual and what constitutes or should constitute property of the

community; what is right for the individual to obtain and to hold as his own?

Here we are touching the great fundamental principles which underlie the Commandments: "Thou shalt not steal" and "Thou shalt not covet." What is stealing? Taking the property which does not belong to you. What can properly belong to anyone as an individual? What may I and should I desire for my own? To some it seems as though the foundations of society were being shaken, for this agitation goes into the family relation. Have you not established a property relation as between man and woman? Should we not agitate that question too and decide whether one man has the right to one woman, or one woman to one man?

But while we are agitating these fundamental things, we are still very far removed from the simplest forms of property honesty. We have developed so strongly the sense of the advantage of the material things, we have given such a position to wealth, to the possession of property in our whole community relations, including marriage itself, that we have made it seem to many men that the one thing most to be desired is the possession of wealth. Moral matters take an inferior place in their minds. Why, see how our very language reflects this con-

ception. Think of the way we speak about marriage: "Has she made a good match?" "Has he made a good match?"—the good referring to money. We count success, not by achievement in behalf of others, but by accumulation for oneself. True, we honor the man who has served the community; but we somewhat shrug our shoulders and show our feeling of good-natured contempt when we hear that the man who has given his life to promote science has left nothing behind him. The man whose career is most imitated is the man who has accumulated a vast fortune.

And now let us turn back to Jesus' teaching with regard to these Commandments of property honesty. What is His teaching and what is the fundamental divine truth here? If we turn to the fifth and following chapters of St. Matthew, the Sermon on the Mount, where we find those searching comments upon and applications of the Sixth Commandment and the Seventh Commandment and the Third and Ninth Commandments, it would seem at first sight as though we found nothing about the Eighth and Tenth. A little more careful study will show, however, that these are not entirely neglected, only they are reached from the other side, if we may so put it. Our Lord does not deal

directly with the Commandments "Thou shalt not steal," "Thou shalt not covet," but with those things which lie at the root of those Commandments.

In the Lord's Prayer, which is contained in these chapters, there is no petition for wealth, for prosperity. There is a petition for the supply of the daily needs of the body; that is all. The prayer concerns itself with the coming of God's kingdom, the doing of God's will on earth as in heaven, the forgiveness of our sins, the deliverance from evil and temptation. For material things the only petition is that little one for the satisfaction of our daily wants and needs: "Give us this day our daily bread".

A little further on in the Sermon on the Mount we find the condemnation of the accumulation of wealth: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust doth consume, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth consume and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also".

Elsewhere our Lord condemns wealth in strong language. "It is easier for a camel to pass through a needle's eye than for a rich man

to enter into the kingdom of heaven." A rich young man comes to him and wants to know what he shall do to be saved. Our Lord tells him that, if he would be perfect, complete, he must sell all that he has and give to the poor and then come and follow Him. The young man is much distressed. He is quite unwilling to do that. The most precious thing to him is his wealth. He cannot give it up; and as he goes away the Lord says: "How hardly shall they that have wealth enter into the kingdom of God."

In the Parable of Dives and Lazarus, which is, by the way, as you may say, a parable of the city, Jesus depicts on the one hand the man who lives in the rich, fashionable part of the city, at ease and comfortable, who bestows alms upon the poor man at his gate, giving him his cast-off clothes and broken victuals and all the other superabundance of his wealth, things which he does not need himself; and, on the other hand, the poor man who lives down in the crowded tenement sections, who has contracted disease, a miserable cripple, fed by the rich man's alms, lying at the rich man's gate, whose sores are licked by the dogs. The rich man lives at ease and in abundance and does no more than give his superfluity to the poor,

sick beggar. Then you have the reverse of this situation in the next world, the rich man suffering in hell, while God, in His infinite mercy, has put the poor, miserable cripple in Abraham's bosom.

Does our Lord condemn wealth as such? and why does He have nothing to say directly about stealing and coveting? The fulfilment of our Lord's teaching, the living of His life, would vastly increase the material resources and the material well-being of the world; but also it would do away with stealing or the temptation to steal; with coveting. There would be no occasion for stealing.

What our Lord did teach positively was this: that we are stewards; that all that we have in wealth, just as all that we have in natural endowments and gifts, in opportunity, in physical strength, is not ours for ourselves, but a trust from God, given to us to use for others. We are entitled to our living out of this trust. We are not entitled to regard it as our own, to be used for our own benefit. Does this mean Socialism? Does it mean that all things are to be owned in common by all men? If we are, in point of fact, the children of one Father in heaven, if we are members of one family and brothers of one another, then, in the end, this

is largely true. Are we then to enforce this by law? Are we to make it a condition of our Christian brotherhood that we live in poverty, that all that we have is put in a common purse, to be shared by all alike? Shall we endeavor to bring in the kingdom of God by establishing this condition among all men?

The Christian Church made the attempt at the outset in Jerusalem to apply that community idea. It failed. Up to the present day all similar attempts have failed. If behind the religious authority in such a matter there were the civil, I believe there would be equally failure. What will come ultimately I cannot say. At the present time, while it may be desirable to socialize more than we have socialized, it seems to me quite clear that any wholesale socialization would defeat its own purpose. The vast body of men and women in the most highly civilized community today, as well as those in more barbarious conditions, require the stimulus of personal ownership, with the sense of personal responsibility which it gives and the personal ambition which it promotes, to make them effective workers. But, while this is true, you and I should see clearly that something that is beyond that, the fundamental things which Jesus came to show and to teach men. What

He said to the young man is meant for us all, but not in that mechanically literal sense in which it has been sometimes understood, which called upon a man to hand over all his goods, and to take upon him the vow of poverty. It has a more exacting meaning and a much broader intent than that.

Interpret it by what Jesus said elsewhere. You are to struggle and strive with all your might to achieve something. To live for nothing, to be a parasite upon the community is, in the final analysis, theft, for theft is the breach of brotherly love and brotherly obligation. It is your obligation and your duty to work; to take without pay is theft. You must pay for your keep in this world and for something more than your mere keep. You must work—not merely because you have to earn a living, because you can not get the money to buy food without it. Most of us are saved from more serious temptation by the fact that we must so work; but even those of us who are in that condition are too prone to concern ourselves not with what we give, but what we get; to be anxious to get as much as we can for as little as possible given in return. Theft, in the final analysis, is to fail in this obligation of love toward my brother; that I take from him more

than I give him. When I do that, then I am stealing from him. He who has so conceived of his relation to his brother does not need to be warned to keep his hand out of his brother's pocket, to refrain from coveting his brother's house; to deal honestly with his brother across the counter, giving full weight and full measure and full value for money received, or to pay full value for goods delivered. Such an one does not need to be told that he may not live at ease, on money which someone else has stored up, himself doing no work in and for the world. Such an one needs not to be told that to live or profit by betting and gambling is stealing. Why? Because he starts from the other side; he is filled with the ardent desire to give something that is worth while, to do something that is worth while, to give and to spend himself and all that he has; because he counts himself, his health, his strength, his mind, his achievements, his art, his handicraft as a trust of which he is but the steward. Nor will he covet another man's goods, for what he covets is the power to give to another. He would not take from, but add to what the other already has. Is it hard, impracticable to apply this principle? How am I to do it in detail? It is to show us that it is neither too hard nor

impracticable that Jesus came and lived among us. His life does not give us the detail of application to our own lives, but it does give us the principle of life, and it shows us how to find the application of that principle to the details of our own life, opening to us the way to God and revealing to us the heart of God himself.

VII.

IMMORTAL MANHOOD.

Ephesians iv. 13-16: Till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error; but speaking truth in love, may grow up in all things into him which is the head, even Christ; from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love.

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CHRIST the Lord is risen to-day. I give you the Easter greeting and the Easter wish that you may rise with Him—rise out of the death of sin into the life of righteousness, rise out of the gloom of mourning into the gladness of heavenly joy, rise out of self into love, out of the flesh into the spirit; and that at last, when you have laid these bodies by, having risen here to work with Christ, you may rise yonder to reign with Him in glory everlasting.

I have read you as my text a long passage from the Epistle to the Ephesians. Note those two thoughts that are contained therein: that now we are no more children; we have grown

to the full stature of manhood, to understand what life is for, to live life. We have found that understanding of life's meaning in Christ. And, if we have accepted Him, we are living the life of manhood, not a life lived for vain and empty toys, not a life lived for things that pass away, but a life lived for things that are enduring; not a life lived in fear and cowardice, not a life lived in selfishness and meanness, but a life gloriously lived, bravely lived, to achieve things imperishable.

Christ came to show the world what manhood is, and he who has accepted Christ has found manhood and has grown up into the stature of the man and is no longer a child. That is one of the thoughts; and the other thought is this: that we who believe in Him, we members of His church, constitute with Him a body of which He is the head. Showing us what manhood is, He sums up all manhood in himself. His life was immortal, His work is imperishable. It goes on still, and all we who have found Him constitute His body, to live His life and do His work for the completion of the world. For the world is in creation. God is working still; and always He is a God of life, a God of activity. Christ was a revelation of that working force of God, which is love, in

the highest product of God's creation, in which He has expressed love as nowhere else—mankind. Christ was the perfect expression of that love in mankind, the love of God incarnate in man.

That Conception of the Church, of the believers in Jesus Christ as constituting His body, living still here on earth, is expressed in our ritual and in our prayers. In the Catechism that we teach our children we tell them that in baptism they are made members of Christ. When we baptise them we assert, in the prayers of the church, that they are born again into the life of Christ; that they have died with Him, that they with Him may rise. It is an assertion of the immortality, of the spiritual part that is in us, a claim to the divine inheritance; and we make the same claim, the same assertion in the prayers of the Communion office. When you and I shall have received the Sacrament to-day, we shall afterwards offer this thanksgiving to God, expressing our belief in such membership in the divinity through Christ: "Almighty and everlasting God, we most heartily thank thee, for that thou dost vouchsafe to feed us who have duly received these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son, our Savior Jesus Christ;

and dost assure us thereby of thy favor and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people, and are also heirs through hope of thy everlasting kingdom, by the merits of the most precious death and passion of thy dear Son."

It is a proud claim that, in true manhood, there is divinity; that the highest expression of manhood is divine; that Jesus, the Son of Man, was an expression of God, the very essence of God, and that we, as we develop that character and enter into His life, are ourselves divine.

It is no new thing for men to claim divinity. The old kings and emperors of the East claimed to be divine. The symbol of divinity is placed before the names of kings in ancient Babylonian documents. The Egyptian sovereigns were of the divine blood, and to them were offered divine rites. They ruled by the power of God, because they were divine. The Roman emperors claimed divinity, and sacrifices were offered to them as gods. But this divinity was the divinity of force, the divinity of a man who gathered into his hands the rights of other men and exercised sovereignty over them, in

whose hand was the right to give life and to take it, to give wealth and to take it away. He arrogated to himself the divine prerogatives, as he conceived divinity. We admire the power, we admire the talent that often went with that power, that created that power; but in the selfishness, the lust, the greed of those men who claimed divine rights, we see the opposite of divinity.

Jesus claimed divinity for something else: for the absolute forgetfulness of self, for the love that yearns to give itself and all it is, all it has, for the service of others, even unto death. He claimed divinity for absolute truth. He claimed divinity for the spiritual something that can dominate and rule the brute forces of the body and be master over all the temptations of lust and malice and selfishness.

In His answer to the High Priest, as St. Matthew reports it, in the twenty-sixth chapter, the 63rd and 64th verses, He asserts the divinity, not which is in some great king, ruling over all, but the divinity that is inherent in man as man. The High Priest adjured Him, by the living God, to "tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him: Thou hast said." He claims for himself the son-ship of God; but He went on further to make that

claim a claim for man: "Nevertheless, I say unto you, henceforth ye shall see the son of man sitting at the right hand of power and coming from the clouds of heaven."

In the old world there had been belief in a certain immortality, but that immortality was the immortality of the man of rank, the man of wealth, the man who could build a great tomb, the man who could spend costly sums for the preservation of his body, who could hire priests to perform the proper ritual, for the man who could leave provisions for someone to care for his tomb and make the proper sacrifices after his death. For the plain man there was no immortality. Jesus' resurrection was the assertion of the immortality inherent in the divine nature of man; not a resurrection of this fleshy body, not a crowning of selfishness and greed, expressing itself, even after death, in great tombs and costly sacrifices; but the resurrection of him who has entered into the life of the spirit, who has sought spiritual things, the immortality of what, perhaps, for a better word, we may designate as the love part in man. For that is the divine element. He who loves conquers death. He who has sought love enters into the life of Christ. And love is immortal. A member with Christ here in the life of love, a man lives on forever victorious over death.

That is the conception which is expressed in the teaching of sacrifice which is set before us continually in the ritual of our Church. In the old time, men sought to appease God by giving Him the best they had. Their thought of divinity was power, authority. The wrath and hatred that flamed up in their own hearts they deified as God. They sought to appease that jealous, wrathful something by the offering of their own sons to God. The Jews reached a better conception of the relation of man and God. It was not Abraham's son that God desired. Let him rather offer a ram in his place. And so they went on, offering burnt sacrifices to God in the place of their children, or seeking to feast with God in a communion feast in which God should eat by fire one part of the beast, and they and their friends another, dining together with God at God's table. The veil of this old law was rent in twain when Jesus offered himself. And our Eucharist is the continual assertion of our oneness with Christ in that conception of what is divine in us and what is divine in the world. The yearning love which desires to give itself is the heart of life and the center of the world. There you find divinity. With that we seek to be at one.

But how can one give oneself to another? We do it day by day. It is as others give themselves to me, with their thought and with their love, that I am made strong to do that which is worth doing. Spiritually they give me of their life and spiritually God gives us of His life through Christ, in whom He expressed himself in man. Yearning for that life, we come begging that we may be made one with Him, one body in the immortal life of immortal love.

God grant to you and to me such membership in Christ and the life divine that was in Him, that we may share His immortality, living here with Him, to rise with Him from the death of this body into the eternal life of the spirit.

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